

DPS Chaparral



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July 2003

Your opinion makes a difference

In July, you'll be receiving instructions on how to complete an online survey that is a follow-up to the 2001 Survey of Organizational Excellence.

The Survey of Organizational Excellence is an employee attitude survey aimed at improving the quality of life in the workplace. The survey is conducted by the School of Social Work at The University of Texas.

DPS management has utilized past results from this survey as an assessment tool and indicator of employee satisfaction. Your answers helped provide an accurate profile of our agency's strengths and weaknesses, which assists the agency's strategic and business planning processes to help improve our workplace and the quality of services we provide to the citizens of Texas.

The Department's management is interested in getting more detailed information about several issues where employees have expressed concerns or problems.

After this "mini-survey" is completed, the results will be shared with DPS employees, and committees will be formed to further address the concerns. The names of all committee members will be published in the Chaparral and all employees are encouraged to contact members to pass along any comments, concerns or ideas for addressing these issues. Committee members will be encouraged to seek out the opinions of their fellow employees.

Every employee is encouraged to complete the survey, which is being conducted online to save on cost. Where possible, employees will be allowed to use internet connections at work to take the survey. Employees also will be able to take the survey at home, the local library or any other place where an internet connection might be available to them. The survey should only take 10 to 15 minutes to complete.

Please complete the survey on or before July 18th by going to this website (<http://www.survey.utexas.edu/dps>).

More information about the Survey of Organizational Excellence is available at www.survey.utexas.edu. General questions about the survey may be directed to soe@uts.cc.utexas.edu or (512) 232-9499.

Dear Fellow Employee:

Please take a moment to read the article about the Survey for Organizational Excellence. Please share your opinions when the survey arrives. My goal for the survey is to get a 100 percent response rate. We cannot make improvements in DPS without your input.

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Also, you'll want to take a look at several articles on pages 2 and 3 of the Chaparral. Several items could have an impact on you: early retirement incentives, random drug testing and increased vacation leave amounts.

If you're thinking about taking advantage of the retirement incentive lump-sum payment, please be sure to investigate your options very carefully.

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We still have DPSers who are serving our country in the military. Our thoughts and prayers are with them. If you'd like more information about who's serving from DPS, you can find out on the web: <http://www.txdps.state.tx.us/military/>.

Thomas A. Davis Jr.

Awards

Lt. **Juan Rodriguez, Jr.**, HP Corpus Christi, recently graduated from the Administrative Officers Course at the University of Louisville. Lt. Rodriguez also received the distinction of "Dean's Scholar," only awarded to a small percentage of students who complete the course. The Administrative Officers Course is part of a joint program with the Southern Police Institute and the Department of Justice Administration.

The Wichita Falls Optimist Club recently recognized Tr. **Cory Lain**, HP Archer City, as "Officer of the Year" during their May 6 meeting.

Terry Leon Smith was recognized with the Director's Award for his heroic actions after witnessing a car crash south of Montague. The car was hit from behind and burst into flames with the driver still inside. The driver was unconscious from the smoke and unable to free himself from the burning vehicle. Seeing the driver in danger, Mr. Smith was able to unbuckle the man and pull him to safety only a few seconds before the car burned to the ground. Had it not been for Smith's immediate response, the driver would not have survived. He was nominated by Tr. **James Bacon**, HP Bowie.

Short Shots

DPS implements drug testing

DPS has implemented a new drug testing policy that includes a random testing program, a for-cause test and critical incident testing (such as after

DPS online: www.txdps.state.tx.us

a major fleet accident) for safety- and security-sensitive positions.

The random program is being implemented in phases. The first phase started on June 1 and included Narcotics, Crime Lab and Ranger employees.

Eventually all commissioned employees will be part of the program. Other employees' job duties will be reviewed on a position-by-position basis to determine if they are safety- or security-sensitive.

The HR Bureau is coordinating the program and will be working with management in the various divisions to identify which positions will be subject to the program.

As stated before, the rest of the agency will be added to the program a few sections at a time.

Retirement incentive lump-sum

At presstime, specific details of the so-called 25 percent retirement incentive were still in the air.

However, one thing was certain: If you are currently eligible or become eligible this summer to take a standard retirement (rule of 80 or 60/5 or 20/50 for CPO), **you must do so ON August 31, 2003**. There is a rumor going around the field that since the bill is effective immediately, employees who qualify can retire in July or June and get the lump-sum. That is not correct.

The bill says, "... To receive a lump-sum payment under this section: 1) a member who is eligible to retire on August 31, 2003, must retire on that date;..." A person who becomes eligible to retire for the first time after 9-1-03 and before 9-1-05 would have to retire in the month they first become eligible in order to get the lump sum.

Something else you should care-

DPS "on the air": **512-424-7777**

fully consider: your decision to retire will affect your annuity from now til the end of time.

A person might become first eligible at a year where their annuity is so low they couldn't live on it. Or, an employee making \$30,000 a year may think, "I'm getting \$7,500," but that is **before** taxes. The 25 percent lump sum is really more like \$5,000.

If you live for 30 years after retirement, that works out to \$13 per retirement check over the next 30 years to get \$5000. So—if your annuity check is going to go down more than \$13 because you retired early, then in the long run you will get less.

Increased annual leave

At press time, Gov. Perry was expected to sign HB 2425, which would increase state employees' annual leave accrual by one hour each month. The bill also would increase the number of hours that could be carried over from year to year.

Speir Scholarship deadline

Wilson E. Speir Scholarship applications will be accepted through August 15. Students must be classified as full-time criminal justice majors and enrolled in Texas universities. Two scholarships will be awarded for \$500 per semester for up to two semesters. Preference will be given to qualified students whose parents are involved in law enforcement. Applicants should submit resumes, transcripts of completed college work and photographs to: Director's Office, c/o DPS, P.O. Box 4087, Austin, TX 78773-0110.

The scholarships are named in honor of the former DPS director, who died in April of 2002.

askthecolonel@txdps.state.tx.us

Critical Incident Response Team

By Dr. Frances Douglas

The Critical Incident Response Team is accepting applications for the next basic training to be held in Austin in December, 2003. We are especially in need of new members in Regions III and IV. Employees can obtain an application for the team by contacting Kathryn Hollis in the Psychological Services Bureau at 512-424-5251 or electronically at kathryn.hollis@txdps.state.tx.us.

Look for news of the Critical Incident Response Team on the DPS Intranet. The link can be found under the Psychological Services Bureau. We will soon be posting the team membership by regions.

Critical Incident Response Team members are available to respond to DPS employees and their families with support during work related or personal critical incident stress. We are also available to respond to critical incidents occurring in other law enforcement agencies upon request.

Narcotic Detection

K-9 Graduation

The DPS K-9 program graduated 4 new K-9 teams. The 11-week K-9 school was conducted in Austin from March 17 to May 30.

The new additions to the K-9 program are: Trooper II Craig Bickers and "Bach" stationed in HP District 1A, Denton; Trooper II Raul Garza and "Bear" stationed in HP District 3C, Raymondville; Trooper I George Correa Jr., and "Nico" stationed in HP District 3A, Kingsville; and Trooper I Derek Evans and "Tag" stationed in HP District 6B, Austin.

They've moved

General Stores, Office Supply and the Receiving Warehouse have all

relocated from DPS Headquarters (HQ) to the old Sears Warehouse on 108 Denson Drive between Headquarters and Highland Mall. This relocation places the three warehouse sections under the same roof, which should be an added convenience for their DPS customers. The Receiving Warehouse will make deliveries to the HQ complex and continue to pick up surplus property. The new phone numbers are:

Rec. Warehouse: (512) 323-9098

General Stores: (512) 323-9536

Office Supply: (512) 323-6548

This location may house other HQ functions in the future.

Firing range opens for training

DPS firearms training is now taking place at the Florence Firing Range, located in Williamson County. Training Academy recruits, who are bused to the location, DPS SWAT and DPS K-9 units currently are training at the complex.

The 46-acre modern training facility has six firing ranges and an open-air pavilion. The firing ranges include a rifle range, shotgun range, multipurpose range with computer-controlled moving targets, pistol range, tactical range and tactical house.

Civilians give L&W a boost

DPS has been beefing up its truck inspection presence in anticipation of the eventual opening of the southern border to Mexican trucks as part of NAFTA. Thanks to federal funding, the total number of License and Weight personnel has increased from 401 to 568, with another round of hiring possible in the future. A majority of the new personnel are non-commissioned truck inspectors and investigators. The 95 non-commissioned employees join 71 new

commissioned L&W personnel to dramatically increase DPS enforcement at several border stations. In the last year, L&W border inspection strength has quadrupled from 53 to 219 inspectors and investigators. Six new temporary inspection stations are open along the border and one more is nearly complete.

Legislative session brings some good news

The 78th Legislative Session brought significant changes to Texas government due to the lagging economy. Although the Department did not receive everything requested, several significant program initiatives received the green light.

The Department was able to secure funding for 170 additional trooper positions and 14 administrative technicians authorized by the prior legislative session. In addition, the Texas Rangers' Unsolved Crime Unit was fully funded this session. These initiatives, along with the other services offered by the Department, will help us provide the level of service Texas citizens have come to expect.

Money for ideas

Want the chance to make \$5,000? The opportunity is yours through the State Employees Incentive Program (SEIP).

Just submit a suggestion at www.seiponline.com. For more information about the program, contact Cindy Torres in Human Resources or visit www.tipc.state.tx.us.

Mile Markers

Promotions

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Monty Lewis Posey, Sgt., Narcotics Garland to Lt., Narcotics Sulphur Springs; **Mickey Mandel Hadnot**, Sgt., Narcotics Lufkin to Lt., Narcotics Henderson; **Jaime Velasquez**, Sgt., Narcotics El Paso to Lt., Narcotics Houston;

William Richard Brazzil, Sgt., Narcotics Lufkin to Lt., Narcotics Lampasas; **Rodney Ray Tandy**, Tr. II, HP Waco to Sgt., Narcotics Bryan;

Clarence Henry McDonald III, Tr. II, HP Weatherford to Sgt., Narcotics Decatur; **Paul Thomas Hopson**, Sgt., HP Nacogdoches to Sgt., Narcotics McAllen; **William Maury Buford, Jr.**, Tr. II, HP Terrell to Sgt., Narcotics Brady; **David P. Galvan**, Tr. II, HP Midland to Sgt., Narcotics Midland; **Jeff Marlin Hudson**, Sgt., HP Cuero to Sgt., Narcotics Victoria;

Gary Jason Graham, Tr. II, HP Baird to Sgt., Narcotics Brownfield;

Bobby Jack Tyler II, Tr. II, HP Amarillo to Sgt., Narcotics Amarillo; **Jeffrey Sedwick Smithwick**, Tr. II, HP Corpus Christi to Sgt., Narcotics Laredo; **Brian Allen Dismukes**, Tr. II, HP Bryan to Sgt., Narcotics Bryan; **Christopher W. Wischkaemper**, Tr. II, HP Post to Sgt., Narcotics Brownsville; **Kip Baer Westmoreland**, Tr. II, HP Webster to Sgt., Narcotics Houston; **Michael Perez**, Tr. II, HP Victoria to Sgt., Narcotics Laredo; **Chad Caton Grimmett**, Tr. II, HP Alpine to Sgt., Narcotics Alpine.

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Mario Rafeal Salinas, Lt., L&W Harlingen to Capt., L&W Laredo; **Roberto Davis**, Sen. Tr., L&W Harlingen to Sgt., L&W Brownsville; **Roscoe Hughey**, Sgt., Gov. Detail Austin to Sgt., Capitol Austin.

Retirements

Benigno Ledesma, Sen. Tr., DL McAllen, 28 yrs., 3 mos., 19 days; **Reynaldo Gonzalez**, Lt., Narcotics Brownsville, 24 yrs., 5 mos., 28 days; **Kenneth Ray Reynolds**, Sgt., Gov. Detail Austin, 23 yrs., 5 mos., 8 days; **Travis Elder Hall**, Sen. Tr., SES San

Antonio, 19 yrs., 4 mos., 20 days;

Carolyn Lannette Roepke, Program Adm. I, Crime Records Austin, 16 yrs., 2 mos., 8 days; **Larry Dennis Gilbreath**, Sgt., Rangers Brownfield, 31 yrs., 11 mos., 14 days; **Dwayne Lynn Pruett**, Sgt., MVT Lufkin, 30 yrs., 7 mos., 7 days;

Janell Herschap, Tech., DL Kingsville, 28 yrs., 1 mo., 24 days; **Gary Wayne Wong**, Sen. Tr., L&W New Braunfels, 26 yrs., 8 mos., 16 days; **Shirley Jean Young**, Supv., Fleet Austin, 24 yrs., 11 mos., 28 days; **Joe Cristan Frias**, Sgt., Narcotics Harlingen, 23 yrs., 4 mos., 22 days; **Sandra Rae Schildhauer**, Tech. DL McKinney, 22 yrs., 4 mos., 10 days; **Cherri Surlena McCan**, Secretary, DL Hurst, 6 yrs., 4 mos., 29 days.

Deaths

Gary Sidney Rowland, ret. Cpl. IV, MVI Garland (July 1963-Sept. 1990) died May 19, 2003; **Elmer Bane McKnight**, ret. Sgt., MVI San Antonio (April 1948-June 1958) died May 27, 2003; **Lance Virgil Goins, Jr.**, ret. Sgt., DL Beaumont (July 1963-Sept. 1993) died June 4, 2003; **William Albert "Dub" Cowan, Jr.**, ret. Commander, CIS Austin (April 1949-Aug. 1985) died May 13, 2003.



*On the
mend...*

Best wishes for a speedy recovery from line-of-duty injuries go to:

Christopher D. Earnest, HP Greenville. Fractured finger on gun hand.

Alfred Eason, HP New Caney. Fractured ankle pursuing drug suspect.

Anthony J. Polito, HP Clarendon. Fractured gun hand during struggle with suspect.

Narcotics Service kicks off DME program

As the Texas marijuana growing season begins, DPS Narcotics investigators, local law enforcement agencies, the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Texas Army National Guard and multijurisdictional task forces are beginning their 2003 domestic marijuana eradication efforts. The Domestic Marijuana Eradication (DME) program, which has operated in Texas since 1987, targets both indoor and outdoor grow sites.

DPS Narcotics officers work with the Texas Army National Guard, the DEA Air Wing and DPS Aircraft, which support the ground efforts by providing aerial reconnaissance. Although local law enforcement agencies often provide information about possible marijuana grows, some plots are located by helicopter.

Anyone with information about marijuana cultivation or smuggling can call 1-800-868-6274 anonymously.